

**§ 70.22 Appeals from denial of requests.**

When a request for access to records or for a waiver of fees has been denied in whole or in part, where a requester disputes matters relating to the assessment of fees, or when a component fails to respond to a request within the time limits set forth in the FOIA, the requester may appeal the denial of the request to the Solicitor of Labor. The appeal must be filed within 90 days of:

(a) The denial, actual or constructive, of the request, including a denial of a request for a fee waiver,

(b) An agency's response on a dispute of matters relating to the assessment of fees, or

(c) In the case of a partial denial, 90 days from the date the material was received by the requester.

The appeal shall state, in writing, the grounds for appeal, including any supporting statements or arguments. To facilitate processing, the appeal should include copies of the initial request and the response of the disclosure officer. The appeal shall be addressed to the Solicitor of Labor, Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20210. Both the envelope and the letter of appeal itself must be clearly marked: "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

[54 FR 23144, May 30, 1989; 54 FR 25204, June 13, 1989]

**§ 70.23 Action on appeals.**

The Solicitor of Labor, or his designee, shall review the appellant's supporting papers and make a determination de novo whether the denial specified in § 70.22 was proper and in accord with the applicable law.

**§ 70.24 Form and content of action on appeals.**

The disposition of an appeal shall be in writing. A decision affirming in whole or in part the denial of a request shall include a brief statement of the reason or reasons for the affirmance, including each FOIA exemption relied upon and its relation to each record withheld, and a statement that judicial review of the denial is available in the United States District Court for the judicial district in which the requester

resides or has his principal place of business, the judicial district in which the requested records are located, or the District of Columbia. If it is determined on appeal that a record should be disclosed, the record should be provided promptly in accordance with the decision on appeal.

**§ 70.25 Time limits and order in which requests and appeals shall be processed.**

Components of the Department of Labor shall comply with the time limits required by the FOIA for responding to and processing requests and appeals, unless there are exceptional circumstances within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(6)(C). A component shall notify a requester whenever the component is unable to respond to or process the request or appeal within the time limits established by the FOIA.

**§ 70.26 Predisclosure notification to submitters of confidential commercial information.**

(a) *In general.* FOIA requests for confidential commercial information provided to the Department by business submitters shall be processed in accordance with this section.

(b) *Designation of confidential commercial information.* Business submitters of information to the Department, at the time of submission or within a reasonable time thereafter, may designate specific information as confidential commercial information subject to the provisions of this section. Such a designation may be made for information which the submitter claims could reasonably be expected to cause substantial competitive harm. The designation must be in writing and whenever possible, the submitter's claim of confidentiality shall be supported by a statement or certification by an officer or authorized representative of the submitter that the identified information in question is, in fact, confidential commercial or financial information and has not been disclosed to the public.

(c) *Notice to submitters of confidential commercial information.* A component shall provide a business submitter with prompt written notice of a request encompassing its business information